

Dear Chairman McDermott and Committee,

I am in favor of extending the 99ers into Tier V.

I am a southern California 99er who had been working and advancing steadily in my IT and supervisory career, pursuing happiness, from 1975 to mid-2008 the last 19 years of which were working as a Network Specialist for the same school district.

While I have not served my country in the military, I feel I have served my country here at home by paying ALL of my taxes, keeping out of trouble, being productive, not greedy, and helping those less fortunate than myself in my community. Many years ago on two separate occasions my wife and I took in homeless acquaintances and helped them back into society.

My wife and I could be considered disabled because of my Palsy, which produces double vision, and her Spina Bifida Occulta, if we pushed it, but we never went that route because we were proud of being productive and contributing members of society.

We are now both unemployed and have been trying to find full-time work for two years. My wife hasn't been able to receive UI because she was working within the past decade in an industry that did not pay unemployment. I am the only one receiving UI in our household and my fourth tier has expired. We are both seeking full time employment and have done so consistently for the last two years.

By the time I lost my job we had three months savings set aside. That wasn't enough. I received no severance pay, as is standard, from the school district I worked for. We accomplished this saving by having no cable or satellite TV, keeping my 32 year old car running, purchasing my wife's car for \$800 from a private party, cooking at home and only going out on rare occasions but it still wasn't enough.

I am concerned about a social and financial depression and possible increase in crime if tier V unemployment does not become enacted. America is like a building with the middle class being the walls and the wealthy owners being the roof. If the middle class collapses even more than it has because of lack of employment and the non-passage of Tier V the roof will fall to the ground. There may be some dishonest wheelers and dealers that will keep the roof up artificially but you can only keep a roof up so long on its own with shoddy materiel. This will hurt me and my fellow citizens.

Now there are massive numbers of teachers without severance pay who will be laid off in the next few weeks. With UI they will probably only make 25-50% of what they made before creating more loss of tax revenue.

As a tax payer I have paid for things I believe in and things I don't believe in. In the case of paying for things I don't believe in I have not missed the concept that those things still may benefit many of my fellow Americans. Raising the deficit to avoid a massive amount of homelessness and rampant neighborhood blight and crime across America is what I believe to be a great investment.

Keep in mind that those receiving unemployment Insurance payouts are still federal tax payers.

If Tier V doesn't pass here are my options and fears:

- I only hope that I FINALLY get employed using ALL of the methods I've learned about and implemented like resumes, cover letters, contacts, phone calls, etc. . . . Note: I've already sent out 100s of resumes and cover letters + cold called many individuals including CEOs of some companies with no luck. My contacts can't even help me find employment in their companies.
- I can't afford to sell my condominium for financial reasons plus I want stay living near our parents to continue to help them. So far with our parents voluntary help we are not behind on our mortgage but without Tier V it would put more of a strain on them, which I never wanted to do in the first place, or we will just lose our home. They are not rich and it's a blessing that they are helping us. I know many of my fellow citizens are not as lucky.
- Our parents have no room in their small houses to take us in. If we become homeless along with other thousands or millions I'm afraid there won't be shelter on a given night and one or both of us will be arrested for trespassing. I currently do not have a criminal record. If I get one in the future do you think that will improve my prospects for getting a job? I don't.

For 28 years my talent has been configuring networks and computers in large organizations not in being a business man or salesman. It looks like no company is willing to hire or train for these positions that, in many cases, pay far less than what a lot of us were making before.

I don't have the health to be an entrepreneur or a long distance commuter due to the Palsy but I do have the health to continue to be a very productive contributor to our society as I had been for thirty-five years up until 2008.

I have worked as hard, if not harder, finding a job as I have working as I have in the past.

Please don't believe that we are all "playing" the system. We are earnestly looking for work every day. Wall Street and the banks have done enough "playing" for all of us. We just want our old productive lives back.

If tier V does not pass tax revenues will be affected that keep our cities, states and country running; even unemployed we are still happily paying federal, state and retail taxes.

As part of our mortgage we are also happily paying county taxes. The UI money is going back into building our society.

Whenever I work on a project I feel it is worth a deficit of time to make things turn-key later on, I believe that the same concept applies to the federal deficit. Spend some now to insure the current and future strength of our country first by insuring there is not another depression which will have a greater number of unemployed than in the 30s and second by investing in companies that can grow and hire more employees.

In speaking with people in my community I have found that it doesn't matter if they have MBAs or PhDs or degrees in other majors, they just cannot find work. This is true of all ages but especially true for a lot of us who are over 50. Due to working with the promise of job security for a school district that provided no education funding for me, beyond the AA I already had before I worked there, and no severance pay I was unable to get my BA. Since then I've looked into grants but they are based on my 2008 earnings. I do not want a FAFSA mortgage on top of my home mortgage. It seems there is a cache-22 where one has to be homeless, wealthy or majorly in debt to get an advanced education.

During World War II there were men and women who had never been formally trained engineers, tool makers, ship and plane builders yet under a strong and supportive management in the manufacturing sector they were trained, without college, to produce planes and ships some of which when bombed were still able to float and fly.

I am not against those with college degrees. I am against the philosophy by employers and recruiters that degreed individuals always know more than people with many years of working experience. I have an AA in Computer Science and that plus my experience saved my employers millions of dollars in equipment maintenance, time and planning over the years.

We need heavy manufacturing again in every area of this country. In consideration of environmental protection I believe our great minds can be unified to create green manufacturing. To me the definition of true management is taking note of the talent around you and bringing them together to build whatever we can dream up without fear of bankruptcy. We cannot remain a consumer society we need to produce things again. Please help bring American jobs back to America. If you do that then we can better help our foreign neighbors.

There are so many people looking for work including myself so please extend the current 99ers to Tier V.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Stephen Michaels
Information Technology Specialist / IT Consultant